

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 058900

EXDIS TOSEC 585

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CU

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: LETTER FROM MAYOR OF MIAMI

ON CUBA POLICY.

(S/S NO.7505248)

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM BOWDLER; INFO TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY
ROGERS

1. THE PROBLEM:

MAURICE A. FERRE, THE MAYOR OF MIAMI, HAS SENT THE
FOLLOWING LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT.

2. BEGIN TEXT: DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I WAS INDEED HONORED
TO HAVE BEEN SELECTED TO MEET YOU AND DINE WITH YOU AND
YOUR PARTY LAST TUESDAY EVENING IN HOLLYWOOD, FLORIDA.
I VERY MUCH COMMEND YOUR EFFORT TO SPEAK DIRECTLY WITH THE
PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, AT A MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF THE
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PRESS, YOU MADE A VERY SPECIFIC DECLARATION REGARDING

YOUR ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY TOWARD CUBA. YOUR STATEMENTS WERE EXPLICIT AND UNEQUIVOCALLY TO THE POINT. I, AND I BELIEVE, MY CONSTITUENTS OF MIAMI, VERY MUCH BELIEVE IN YOUR STANCE.

CONTINUE TEXT: EXACTLY ONE YEAR AGO, IN MID-FEBRUARY, I WROTE TO PRESIDENT NIXON REGARDING THE SAME SITUATION (COPY OF MY LETTER IS ATTACHED). ON APRIL 8TH, I RECEIVED A LETTER FROM SPECIAL ASSISTANT ROLAND L. ELLIOTT (COPY ALSO ATTACHED) STATING, IN SYNTHESIS, VERY MUCH WHAT YOU DECLARED IN HOLLYWOOD ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH, 1975.

YOUR STATEMENT RECEIVED MUCH PUBLICITY IN OUR LOCAL NEWSPAPERS. (I AM ATTACHING AN EDITORIAL IN OUR PRESTIGIOUS LATIN NEWSPAPER, DIARIO LAS AMERICAS, WHICH HAS THE LARGEST CIRCULATION OF ANY SPANISH NEWSPAPER IN THE UNITED STATES).

I WAS VERY SURPRISED ON READING THE SUNDAY HEADLINES ON SECRETARY KISSINGER'S DECLARATION SUPPORTING THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO ON CUBA, PROVIDED THE OAS SO VOTED WITH THE U.S.'S POSITIVE VOTE. THE SECRETARY OF STATE FURTHER SAID THAT THE FORD ADMINISTRATION IS READY TO MOVE IN A NEW DIRECTION TOWARD CUBA AND THAT THE UNITED STATES IS NOW PREPARED TO SUPPORT THE O.A.S.'S EFFORT TO REVOKE THE EMBARGO. THIS CAME AS A SURPRISE BECAUSE OF THE DIVERGENCE WITH YOUR FEBRUARY 28TH STATEMENT THAT CUBA MUST FIRST SHOW GOOD FAITH BEFORE A UNITED STATES' REAPPRAISAL OF OUR OFFICIAL POSTURE.

THE STATEMENT BY A STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL DESCRIBING KISSINGER'S SPEECH AS "DELIBERATELY AND CAREFULLY CONSTRUCTED" WOULD IMPLY THAT THE SPEECH HAD BEEN WRITTEN WHEN YOU HAD YOUR HOLLYWOOD PRESS CONFERENCE THREE DAYS BEFORE THE HOUSTON KISSINGER SPEECH. THE NATURAL CONCLUSIONS CAN ONLY BE:

1. THAT YOU WERE AWARE OF KISSINGER'S STATEMENT TO BE PRONOUNCED A FEW DAYS LATER AND DELIBERATELY MISGUIDED THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THIS SEEMS TO BE A CONFIDENTIAL

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COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE EXPLANATION AFTER THE JOHNSON AND NIXON EXPERIENCES. IT CERTAINLY WOULD NOT SEEM POLITICALLY OR PRACTICALLY POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO DELIBERATELY MISGUIDE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. FURTHERMORE, FROM YOUR OUTSTANDING RECORD OVER THE YEARS, THIS IS NOT IN CHARACTER WITH YOUR INTEGRITY.

2. THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER DID NOT INFORM YOU OF HIS

DECLARATION. ON FEBRUARY 8TH, MR. CHARLES COLSON SAID ON THE "TODAY SHOW" THAT PRESIDENT NIXON'S MAIN CONCERN ABOUT GERALD FORD'S ASCENSION TO PRESIDENT WAS THAT HE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO CONTROL HENRY KISSINGER. THIS STATEMENT APPEARED IN THE MIAMI HERALD ON FEBRUARY 8TH, QUOTING FROM A DOUGLAS WATSON ARTICLE CONTINUE TEXT: IN THE WASHINGTON POST. I, OF COURSE, QUESTION THE VERACITY OF COLSON'S STATEMENT AND AM SURE THE MAJORITY OF AMERICANS TOOK IT WITH A GRAIN OF SALT. UNFORTUNATELY, SECRETARY KISSINGER'S SPEECH ON SATURDAY IMMEDIATELY BRINGS BACK THAT QUESTION OF HIS ACCOUNTABILITY TO YOU.

AS AN AMERICAN I WAS, AND AM MOST CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR DILEMMA. SECRETARY KISSINGER HAS INDEED BEEN OF VALUABLE SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY AND IT WOULD BE A SHAME TO IN ANY WAY HAMPER OR THWART HIS VERACITY OR ACTIVITIES, BUT, MR. PRESIDENT, IT IS OBVIOUSLY EITHER HIS CREDIBILITY OR YOURS. AT THIS TIME OF SERIOUS CROSSROADS IN SO MANY FRONTS FOR OUR COUNTRY, WE CANNOT HAVE EVEN THE SLIGHTEST IMPLICATION OF HESITATION OR AMBIGUITY IN A MAJOR POSTURE BY OUR PRESIDENT.

RESPECTFULLY, MAURICE A. FERRE (SIGNED) MAURICE A. FERRE, MAYOR OF MIAMI. END TEXT.

3. WE HAVE DRAFTED THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED RESPONSE FOR SIGNATURE IN THE WHITE HOUSE.

4. BEGIN TEXT: DEAR MR. MAYOR: THE PRESIDENT HAS ASKED ME TO REPLY TO YOUR LETTER OF MARCH 3, WHICH ARRIVED AT THE WHITE HOUSE ON MARCH 10.

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I CANNOT AGREE THAT ANY CONFLICT EXISTS BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS IN MIAMI ON OUR CUBA POLICY AND THE STATEMENTS OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON THAT SUBJECT AT HOUSTON. THE PRESIDENT MADE CLEAR THAT A CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY TOWARD CUBA WOULD DEPEND ON A CHANGE IN THE ATTITUDE OF THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT. HE DID NOT ADDRESS THE QUESTION OF THE OAS SANCTIONS WHICH REST ON THE COLLECTIVE WILL OF THE 21 NATIONS SIGNATORY TO THE RIO TREATY.

FOR HIS PART, THE SECRETARY REITERATED THAT A CHANGE IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CUBA CANNOT COME UNLESS THE GOVERNMENT OF CUBA DEMONSTRATES A NEW ATTITUDE -- "A READINESS TO ASSUME THE MUTUALITY OF OBLIGATION AND REGARD", AS HE PUT IT. THAT STATEMENT IS ENTIRELY CONSISTENT WITH THE PRESIDENT'S DECLARATION.

WITH RESPECT TO THE OAS SANCTIONS, THE SECRETARY INDICATED THAT THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO CONSULT THE VIEWS OF OUR OAS PARTNERS -- AS WE ARE PREPARED TO DO ON ALL MATTERS OF MUTUAL CONCERN IN THE HEMISPHERE. AS YOU KNOW, A MAJORITY OF THE COUNTRIES SIGNATORY TO THE RIO TREATY NOW FAVOR MODIFYING OR ELIMINATING THE

SANCTIONS, ALTHOUGH THE PROPONENTS OF CHANGE FELL SHORT OF THE REQUIRED TWO-THIRDS VOTE AT THE MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS LAST NOVEMBER IN QUITO. THE SECRETARY DID NOT STATE THAT AN END TO THE OAS SANCTIONS WOULD MEAN A CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY. NEITHER DID HE SAY THAT THE U.S. WILL VOTE TO END THOSE SANCTIONS. WHAT HE DID SAY WAS THAT IF THEY WERE EVENTUALLY REPEALED, THE U.S. WOULD CONSIDER CHANGES IN ITS OWN POLICY BASED ON THE INTERESTS OF THIS COUNTRY AND THE ATTITUDE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CUBA.

AGAIN, I BELIEVE YOU WILL FIND THAT FORMULATION CONSISTENT WITH THE PRESIDENT'S PREVIOUS STATEMENTS. I CAN FURTHER ASSURE YOU THAT THE PRESIDENT CAREFULLY REVIEWED THE SECRETARY'S SPEECH IN ADVANCE OF ITS DELIVERY.

YOU WILL FIND ENCLOSED A COPY OF THE SECRETARY'S
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SPEECH AND THE PRESIDENT'S RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ON OUR CUBA POLICY AT HIS MIAMI PRESS CONFERENCE. SINCERELY,
END TEXT.

5. RECOMMENDATION:

THAT YOU APPROVE THE FOREGOING DRAFT RESPONSE FOR FORWARDING TO THE WHITE HOUSE.

APPROVE DISAPPROVE

INGERSOLL

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